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CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

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LET'S GET
OUT OF HERE--
BEFORE THOSE
MONSTERS
DESTROY US ALL!



0989 30453

BUCKLER &
RUBINSTEIN

FOUR MEN LIVING ON *BORROWED TIME*, DARING THE STRANGE AND INEXPLICABLE, EXPLORING THE *BIZARRE*,
BRAVING THE *HORRENDOLIS*. FOUR MEN--

CHALLENGERS of the UNKNOWN

SCENE FROM A
NIGHTMARE:

IN THE SMALL, NEW
ENGLAND TOWN OF
PERDITION, THREE
MEN BURST THROUGH
THE DOORS OF A
DESANCTIFIED
CHURCH, AND FIND--

JUNE!

TAKE A SINGLE
STEP, GENTLEMEN,
AND YOUR FRIEND
WILL BECOME ONE
WITH MY NASALA!

YOU MUST DO AS
I COMMAND--

--OR THE GIRL
WILL DIE!

CHAPTER
1

SPECIAL GUEST-STAR:
THE INIMITABLE

SWAMP
THING

VERSES OF VENGEANCE
AND VICTORY FROM THE
PENS AND PENCILS OF--

GERRY CONWAY *
WRITER

KEITH GIFFEN *
PENCILLER

JOHN CELARDO *
INKER

JERRY GERPE
CRAYOLA-WELDER

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MEET THEM: RED RYAN, MOUNTAINEER AND ELECTRONICS GENIUS; ROCKY DAVIS, FORMER OLYMPIC WRESTLING CHAMPION AND ADVENTURER--

--AND ACE MORGAN, TEST PILOT AND ASTRONAUT, LEADER OF THEIR GROUP!

OBEY YOU?

LIKE HELL WE WILL!

THESE, THEN, ARE THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN!

THEY HAVE COME TO THIS TOWN TO SEEK MEDICAL HELP FOR A DYING COMRADE, THE FOURTH AND FINAL CHALLENGER, PROFESSOR PROF HALEY--

--AND INSTEAD, THEY HAVE FOUND HORROR.

--AND THE FIGHTING SKILLS OF THESE THREE HEROES PROVE WOEFULLY INADEQUATE AGAINST THE COMBINED STRENGTH OF A SINGLE, HYDRA-HEADED EAST.

--THEIR STRUGGLE IS BRIEF AND IN VAIN.

THEY FIGHT AS ONE ENTITY, THESE WORSHIPPERS OF MINAGALA.

INFECTED BY THE FLUNSOID POISON OF A MONSTER THEY CALL MINAGALA THE TOWNSPEOPLE ARE NO LONGER HUMAN--

AND SO, WHILE THE CHALLENGERS BATTLE BRAVELY--

OVERPOWERED, THEY FALL, AND A BATTLE FOUGHT IN EERIE SILENCE IS ABRUPTLY OVER.

THEY'RE **STRONG**, MASTER. THEIR STRENGTH WILL PROVE **USEFUL** FOR OUR PLAN.

THEY SHALL OPEN THE **SEVEN DOORWAYS**, AND WHEN THEY HAVE--

--YOUR KIND SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH--

--AND I SHALL TAKE MY REWARD --AS YOUR FAITHFUL SLAVE!

HIS NAME IS **HEATHCLIFF MONROE**, A **DOCTOR**. AND SOME MAY FEEL, WITH GOOD CAUSE, THAT HE IS THE MONSTER HERE, NOT **M'NAGALA!**

THEY MAY WELL BE **RIGHT!**

A THOUSAND MILES AWAY, AT **CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN**, COMPUTER RELAYS HUM AND PURR LIKE SATISFIED FELINES, PROCESSING DATA AND ISSUING **INFORMATION...**

THE **QUESTIONER**: A SPOILED LITTLE RICHBOY NAMED **CLAYBURNE**, WOULD-BE **CHALLENGER...**

THE **QUESTIONS**: SEE FOR YOURSELF...

QUERY4: PERDITION, PA.

REPLY: SPECIFIC INFORMATION REQUIRED?

QUERY4: BIOLOGICAL ABNORMALITIES

REPLY: KIND?

QUERY4: REFER TISSUE SAMPLE, HALEY

REPLY: WAIT.

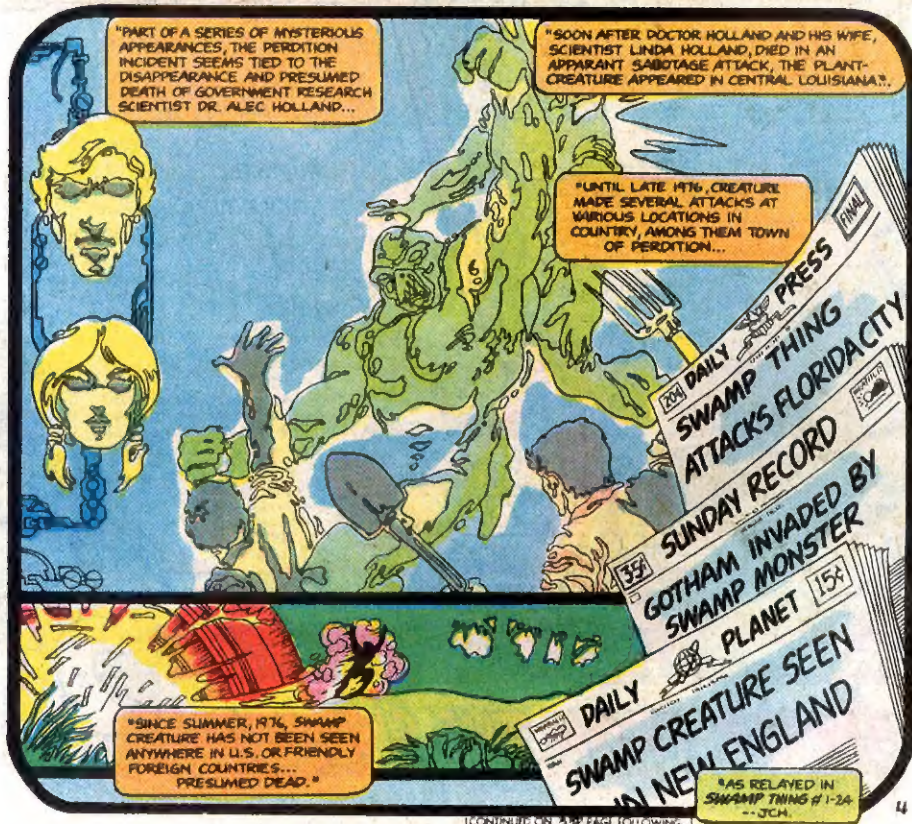
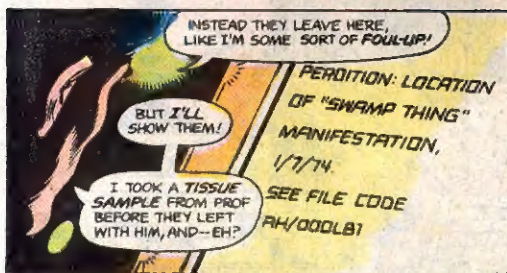
BLASTED COCKEYED COMPUTER! CAN'T YOU EVEN ANSWER A SIMPLE QUESTION WITHOUT **STALLING?**

YOU'RE AS BAD AS THOSE NITWIT CHALLENGERS!

CHAPTER

2

SAVIOR FROM THE SWAMP?





HUH? WHAT'S ALL THAT GOT TO DO WITH THE PROF'S TISSUE SAMPLE?

ALEX HOLLAND IS EXPERT ON BIOCHEMICAL ABNORMALITIES

"YEAH, BUT YOU SAID HOLLAND WAS DEAD."

DATA UPDATE: DOCTOR ALEC HOLLAND REPORTED ALIVE AND WELL, LIVING IN QUINN, OREGON WITH BROTHER AND WORKING ONCE MORE FOR GOVERNMENT.

SOURCE: CONFIDENTIAL DEFENSE DEPART. FILES

COMPUTER—I THINK YOU JUST HIT PAYDIRT!



THIS MAY BE WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR, RUTH.

FORTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER, AT A SMALL UNIVERSITY NESTLED IN THE HEART OF QUIET QUINN, OREGON...

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, ALEC...



...I'M NOT SO SURE I WANT YOU TO DEVELOP A WORKING BIO-RESTORATIVE FORMULA...

...NOT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST TIME. *

RUTH, THAT PART OF MY LIFE IS OVER! THE SWAMP THING IS DEAD...

...THANKS TO YOU AND MY BROTHER EDWARD. I'M HUMAN AGAIN, RUTH, NOT A MONSTER.

I'M A MAN... AND NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO ME THAN YOU...

OH, ALEC, SOMETIMES I FEEL SO... FRIGHTENED.

DON'T BE, RUTH.

NEITHER OF US EVER HAS TO BE FRIGHTENED AGAIN...

DOCTOR HOLLAND?

MY NAME'S CLAYBURNE...
AND I NEED YOUR HELP!

THE SUN HAS BEEN DOWN FOR AN HOUR
IN PERDITION, PENNSYLVANIA, YET ONLY
NOW DO THE CHURCH DOORS OPEN AND THE
NIGHT-DWELLERS APPEAR, AS...

YOU UNDERSTAND
OUR BARGAIN,
GENTLEMEN?

YEAH, WE DO
WHAT YOU
TELL US--

--AND YOU
DON'T KILL RED,
JUNE, OR PROF!
SOME BARGAIN!

YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL WE
CHOSE TO BARGAIN AT ALL, AFTER
YOUR TREACHEROUS ATTACK.

TAKE THIS
BOOK...AND FOLLOW
THE INSTRUCTIONS
IN CHAPTER
THIRTEEN.

YOUR VESSEL HAS
ALREADY BEEN STOCKED
WITH THE NECESSARY
...EQUIPMENT.

"BUT BETRAY US AGAIN..."
THE REMAINDER OF THE
SENTENCE GOES UNSPOKEN!

SILENTLY, THE TWO MEN
BOARD THE CHALLENGERS'
STREAMLINED JET AND
LEAP SKYWARD...

WHILE BELOW, THE ROBED FIGURES
WATCH TILL THE JET IS OUT OF VIEW...
THEN SLOWLY RETURN TO THEIR
BLACK CHURCH!

THE GODS CRAWL CLOSER

CHAPTER 3

MISTER, YOU JUST
MADE THE BIGGEST
MISTAKE OF YOUR
LIFE!

ACE AND ROCKY WILL
NEVER COOPERATE
WITH YOU--

NEVER!

FOR YOUR SAKE,
I HOPE THEY DO,
MR. RYAN.

THIS BOOK YOU
GAVE THEM...WHAT
IS IT? WHAT'S GOING
TO HAPPEN...?

MILLENNIA AGO, OUR WORLD WAS THE SITE OF A COSMIC
DOORWAY, MISS ROBBINS. THROUGH US, AS THROUGH A
PORTAL, THE GODS COULD ROAM OUR UNIVERSE AT WILL.

GODS SUCH AS MYNAGALA
THE ETERNAL... WHO HAS
OBSERVED OUR CONTINUUM
SINCE BEFORE THE BIRTH
OF MAN...

...AND GAVE US OUR VIOLENCE
AND OUR EVIL... IN THOSE DARK
DAYS WHEN ONLY SLIME CRAWLED
THE EARTH.

"YET MYNAGALA AND HIS
KIN WERE SHUT OFF FROM
OUR COSMOS A BILLION
BILLION YEARS AGO, BY
FORCES THEY CALL THE
GOLDEN ONES-- RIVALS
OF MYNAGALA'S KIND
FOR CONTROL OF ALL
THE GALAXIES.

"FOR A TIME INCONCEIVABLE TO HUMAN
MENTALITY, MYNAGALA AND HIS
BRETHREN WAITED FOR A CHANCE TO
COME TO OUR WORLD... TO CONQUER...

"...AND TO CLAIM THE EVIL THEY
HAD CREATED. IT SEEMED THAT
TIME WOULD NEVER COME..."

"...AND SO M'NAGALA, ENLISTING THE AID OF HIS BROTHER, RH'THULLA OF THE WIND, AND THEIR SISTER, KAG'NARU OF THE AIR, REACHED OUT TO MAN."

"...LEAVING VISIONS WHICH TWISTED THEIR INTELLECT AND CORRUPTED THEIR VERY SOULS."

THIS HAPPENED IN THE YEARS 932 A.D., 1013 A.D., AND 1257 A.D.

ONE OF THE MEN TOUCHED WAS AN ANCESTOR OF MINE... MALCOLM MONROE.

"...TOUCHING THE MINDS OF A SELECT GROUP OF LEARNED MEN..."

HE WROTE THE BOOK I GAVE YOUR COMPATRIOTS.

FOR CENTURIES, ITS FORMULAE WERE USELESS... INCOMPREHENSIBLE... UNTIL A MAN NAMED ABRAHAM SPOKE THE SPELL WHICH RELEASED M'NAGALA*...

SWAMP THING #8. -- JCH.

"...ALLOWING HIM TO WALK ONCE MORE ACROSS OUR FAIR GREEN HILLS SEEKING THE MASS HE NEEDS FOR SURVIVAL."

THEN--THE BOOK ACE AND ROCKY HAVE--

--WILL OPEN THE SEVEN DOORWAYS CONNECTING OUR WORLD TO M'NAGALA'S!

HIS FAMILY WILL JOIN HIM ON EARTH--

--AND DESTINY WILL BE FULFILLED!

HEATHCLIFF MONROE'S IS AN UNHEALTHY LAUGH, AND PERHAPS IT'S JUST AS WELL NEITHER ACE NOR ROCKY CAN HEAR HIM NOW...

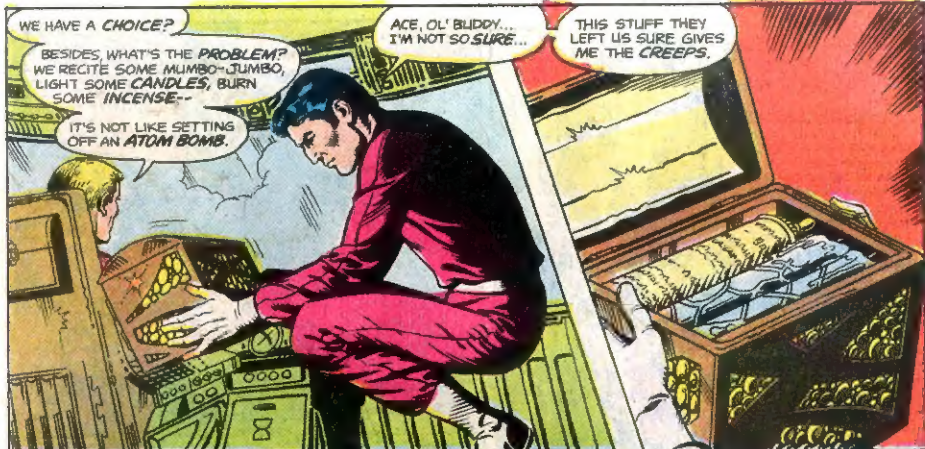
THEY FEEL ILL ENOUGH AS IT IS...

CRIPES, ACE, THIS STUFF IS SICK!

SKIP THE CRITIQUE AND TELL ME OUR DESTINATION, ROCKY.

LONDON, OUTSIDE CHARING CROSS.

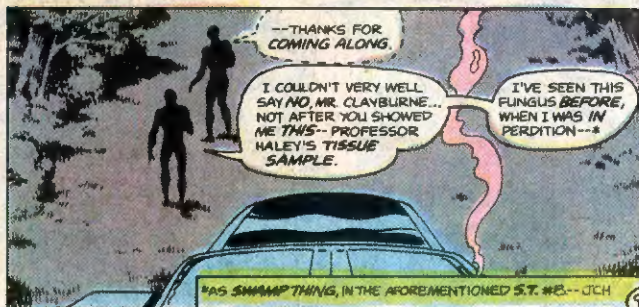
SAY, ACE, ARE WE GONNA GO THROUGH WITH IT--I MEAN, REALLY?



--ANOTHER JET, DESIGNED MUCH LIKE A NEW NASA SPACE SHUTTLE, DROPS FROM THE NIGHT SKY INTO A CLEARING OUTSIDE PERDITION!

FROM OREGON TO PENNSYLVANIA IN LESS THAN FIFTY MINUTES!

IF I HADN'T SEEN IT... I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT, MISTER CLAYBURNE.



--AND IF IT'S RETURNED,
THE POTENTIAL DANGER IS
TOO HORRIBLE TO
CONTEMPLATE!

AGAINST HIS WILL, ALEC
HOLLAND REMEMBERS--
HE REMEMBERS THE
SHAMBLING MOCKERY
OF A MAN HE ONCE WAS

AND HE REMEMBERS
THE CREATURE FROM
THE STARS, WHOM MEN
CALL MINAGALA.



CHANGE THE WORD MAKES ALEC
HOLLAND LOOK DOWNWARD, AND HE
SEES AGAIN WHAT HE SAW DAYS AGO
AND HAS KEPT SECRET.

CHANGE FOR ALEC
HOLLAND, IT'S
ALREADY BEGUN..

I WAS HOPING THE BIO-RESTORATIVE
FORMULA COULD REVERSE WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO ME--

--BUT NOW IT'S
TOO LATE.

WHEN CLAYBURNE
CAME TO ME AND I
REALIZED WHAT WE
WERE DEALING
WITH--

--I HAD NO CHOICE
BUT TO GIVE UP MY
OWN RESEARCH!

SHUDDERING, HE THRUSTS
THE MEMORY ASIDE, AS

THAT'S MONROE'S
HOUSE--SEE THE
SIGN?

PROF MUST
BE IN THERE

FOR GOD'S
SAKE, WE HAVE
TO FIND HIM
QUICKLY--

--BEFORE
HE BEGINS TO
CHANGE!

KRAKK!

THIS
IS MORE
IMPORTANT,
AND --

CLAYBURNE!
LOOK OUT!



GONE ARE ALL THOUGHTS OF MIGHT-HAVE-BEENS FOR ALEC HOLLAND. THIS IS THE MOMENT OF TRUTH..

DESPERATION SENDS HIM SWINGING, GUIDES HIS FIST TO CONNECT WITH FLESH--



--AND A FOOT INTO A JELLY-LIKE STOMACH.

YET, WHAT ALEC HOLLAND KICKS IS NOT FLESH, BUT SOMETHING ELSE--

--SOMETHING DISGUSTING!



OH MY STARS N' GARTERS

GAAK!
CHOKES!

THEIR BODIES. COMPLETELY DISSOLVED BY THE FUNGUS ABSORBER!

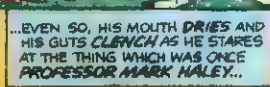
IF PROFESSOR HALEY IS LIKE THIS--



HELP ME



ALEC HOLLAND HAS SEEN MANY FIENDISH THINGS IN THE MONTHS HE WANDERED AMERICA..



...EVEN SO, HIS MOUTH DRIES AND HIS GUTS CLENCH AS HE STARES AT THE THING WHICH WAS ONCE PROFESSOR MARK HALEY..



CLAYBURNE.. FOR THE LOVE OF GOD.

AND WHEN HE HEARS THE MAN-THING'S PAINFUL CRY, ALEC HOLLAND'S SOUL SCREAMS IN SYMPATHY..

ALL MONSTERS

GOOD
and
EVIL





LORD... LOOK AT HIM... IT'S
HOPELESS... **HOPELESS!**

NOT... **HOPELESS**...
NEED **SOUND**...

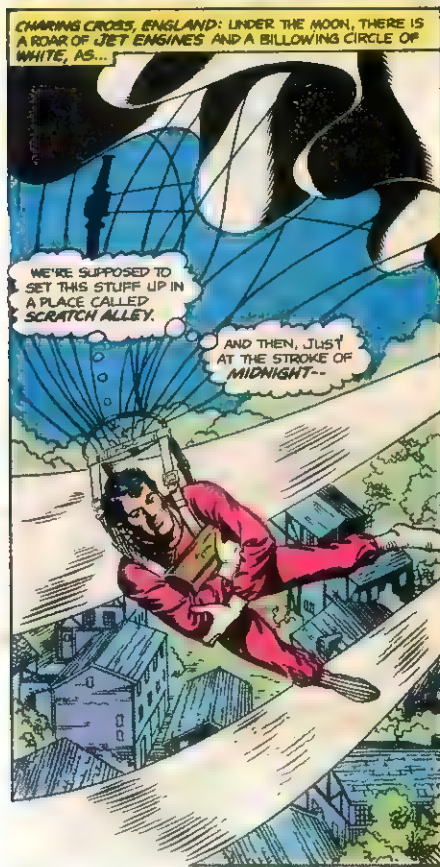
MY NAME'S **HOLLAND**,
PROFESSOR I'M A **DOCTOR**.
IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU
CAN **TELL** ME--



FUNGUS
PLANTLIFE.

SENSITIVE TO
HIGH **FREQUENCY**
SOUNDS **SONICS**.

LISTEN



CHARING CROSS, ENGLAND: UNDER THE MOON, THERE IS
A **ROAR** OF **JET ENGINES** AND A **BILLOWING** CIRCLE OF
WHITE, AS...

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO
SET THIS STUFF UP IN
A PLACE CALLED
SCRATCH ALLEY.

AND THEN, JUST
AT THE **STROKE** OF
MIDNIGHT--



--WE'VE GOTTA READ
A **SPELL**, LIGHT SOME
CANDLES--

--AND HOPE ALL
HELL DOESN'T
BREAK LOOSE!

MAN, DOES
THIS **BUG** ME!

AND, AS ROCKY DAVIS BEGINS HIS PREPARATIONS...

I DIDN'T TELL ROCKY WHAT I'M PLANNING BECAUSE IF IT FAILS, I WANT IT ON MY CONSCIENCE--AND MINE ALONE!

IF THE THING WE SUMMON UP IS ANYTHING LIKE ITS PAL IN PERDITION, THIS MIGHT WORK--

--BUT IT'S A LONG SHOT

THE LONGEST SHOT I'VE EVER MADE!

IF I MAKE IT!

I HATE THIS. I REALLY HATE THIS.

IT DOESN'T TAKE ROCKY DAVIS LONG TO COMPLETE THE ARRANGEMENTS, EVEN WITH TREMBLING HANDS, AND SO, LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES LATER, AS A DISTANT CLOCK CHIMES TWELVE...

SONS OF DARKNESS,
BROTHERS OF THE NIGHT,

IN YOUR HALLOWED CAVERNS
SEE OUR LIGHT--

ANSWER THE CALL OF THOSE WHO SEEK YOU--
COME TO US NOW, PLEASE, WE PRAY YOU!

SEVEN BROTHERS AND SEVEN DOORS,
SEVEN SISTERS AND ONE DOOR MORE!

DEAD THOUGH YOU MAY BE,
HEAR US, WE PLEA--

—COME TO US NOW,
FULFILL YOUR DESTINY!

—AND IN THAT DARKENED
ALLEYWAY, ONE DOOR OPENS:

AND THROUGH IT
COMES A NIGHTMARE!

THERE IS WIND AND
THERE IS COLD—

YAAAAHH!

SIMULTANEOUSLY, IN THE TWICE DAMNED TOWN OF PERDITION...

YOU'RE SURE-- THIS
EMERGENCY SIREN
FROM THE JET-- WILL
BE ENOUGH?

IF IT ISN'T--WE WON'T
HAVE--A SECOND CHANCE!

AND EVEN IF
IT IS, MY SECOND
CHANCE IS GONE
FOREVER!

I'M CHANGING BACK INTO SWAMP
THING! THE ANTIDOTE MY BROTHER
GAVE ME WAS ONLY TEMPORARY.
AND WITHOUT COMPLETING MY WORK
ON THE BIO-RESTORATIVE FORMULA
I'LL BE TRAPPED IN THIS MISSHAPEN
BODY... FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!

CLAYBURNE
AND PROF
CAN'T SEE
ME IN THIS
LIGHT--

--AND THAT'S
HOW I WANT IT!

LET THE WORLD
REMEMBER ALEC
HOLLAND AS A **MAN**--
NOT A MONSTER!

HOLLAND! WHERE
ARE YOU--?

FORGET HIM,
CLAYBURNES...

THE SIREN...USE...IT!
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE...

USE IT!

FINGERS FUMBLING, CLAYBURNE
DOES AS HE'S TOLD--

--AND SOUND PIERCES THE SILENCE LIKE A **SINGING SWORD!**

JUNE! LOOK AT THE
TOWNSPEOPLE--
THEY'RE GOING
NUTS!

WHAT ON
EARTH--?

IT'S THAT SIREN
SOUND, RED! THEY
CAN'T STAND THE
SOUND--NONE OF
THEM CAN!

REEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

MAYBE...NONE OF THE
PEOPLE...BUT M'NAGALA
...CAN RESIST IT...AND IS!

THE SIREN ISN'T ENOUGH...
BUT PERHAPS...WITH A
LITTLE HELP...

...M'NAGALA CAN
BE DESTROYED...
AFTER ALL!

THIS IS ALEC HOLLAND, NO LONGER A MAN,
NOT QUITE A MONSTER, CONDEMNED BY
FORCES BEYOND HIS CONTROL--

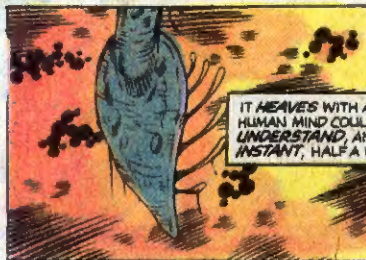


--BUT STILL
A FIGHTER--

--STILL A HERO!



FLAME SPREADS OVER THE
CREATURE'S SLIMEY SURFACE
LIKE FIRE ON OIL, AND IN
SECONDS THE GOD FROM
BEYOND IS A SPARKLING
FIREBALL...



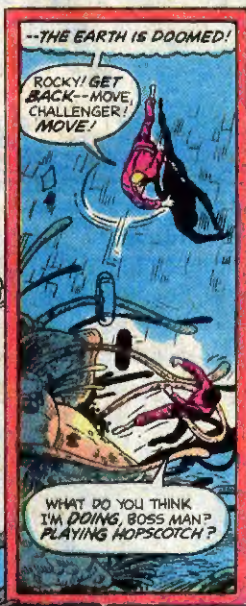
IT HEAVES WITH AN AGONY NO
HUMAN MIND COULD EVER
UNDERSTAND, AND AT THE SAME
INSTANT, HALF A WORLD AWAY--



ROCKY!

THAT THING'S GOT
HIM--AND IT'S EVEN
WORSE THAN I'D
IMAGINED!

DEAR LORD, I HOPE
I'VE GUESSED RIGHT!
IF THIS FUEL ROD
DOESN'T WORK--



--THE EARTH IS DOOMED!

ROCKY! GET
BACK--MOVE,
CHALLENGER!
MOVE!

WHAT DO YOU THINK
I'M DOING, BOSS MAN?
PLAYING HOPSCOTCH?



SHUT UP, ROCKY--
AND PRAY MY AIM'S
AS SHARP AS
YOUR MOUTH!

I'VE ONLY
GOT TIME FOR
ONE SHOT--

BULL'S-EYE!

STRUCK, THE FUEL POD
EXPLODES, ROCKING THE
ALLEY WITH A SOUND
LIKE THUNDER--

--AND BLASTING THE
COSMIC INVADER FROM
HERE--TO ETERNITY!

WHEE-O! HOW'D YOU
EVER THINK OF THAT?

HOW ELSE, ROCKY?
I SAW IT IN "JAWS"!

HECK, IF IT'S
GOOD ENOUGH
FOR A GREAT
WHITE SHARK--

MORGAN...
SHUT UP!

EPILOGUE:

TWO HOURS LATER, AS THE
FIRES DAMPEN IN PERDITION...

GOTTA HAND IT
TO YOU, CLAYBURNE.
FOR ONCE IN YOUR
LIFE... YOU DID
GOOD.

HOLD THE MEDALS
TILL AFTER WE GET
PROF TO A HOSPITAL.
HE'S SINKING FAST.

BUT DOCTOR
HOLLAND... YOU
SAID HE WAS
WITH YOU,
CLAYBURNE...?

HE WAS... BUT HE
DISAPPEARED. FROM
THE LOOK OF HIM, I
THINK THE FUNGUS
WAS BEGINNING TO
AFFECT HIM...

I THINK... HE
MUST BE... DEAD.

YOU'RE RIGHT, CLAYBURNE...
ALEC HOLLAND IS DEAD...

... BUT THE
SWAMP THING
LIVES ON...

... OH, LORD, HE
LIVES ON...

AND FOR THE MUCK-ENCRUSTED
MOCKERY OF A MAN, IT IS ANYTHING
BUT... THE END!

NEXT ISSUE:

BECAUSE YOU ASKED FOR IT,
THE STARTLING RETURN OF
COMICS' MOST DEMANDED
HERO--

DEADMAN

IN CHALLENGERS #84 ON SALE SEPT. 20TH



EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm telling you, with doing the editing on quite a number of new and revived titles, I seem to be typing up more than my share of "Editor's Notes" explaining why we haven't comments on the first issue of a new or revived book when you're reading the fourth issue. So, this time I'm not going to explain it! Instead, we're going to jump right into the mail on the **CHALLENGERS** appearances in **SUPER-TEAM FAMILY**:

Good Morning:

My ride to work having called in sick this morning, I find myself faced with the prospect of either taking the day off or hitching some 40-odd miles through the invigorating temperature of +10°. Obviously, being a man of stern character, I chose the more difficult of the two by remaining home and drafting this note of congratulations on your successful revival of the **Challs**.

EDITORIAL INTERRUPTION: Excuse me, James, but before I type up another one of these **CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN MAIL ROOM** pages, I want to get something editorially clear. For some unknown reason, I have had an aversion to the term "**Chells**" ever since I first saw it. I always felt it tended to wipe away some of the nobility of the team. After all, **SHOWCASE #11 (CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN)** was the **VERY FIRST COMIC** this editor ever read (now it can be told!), so let's run by that last phrase again, shall we?—JCH

... congratulations on your successful revival of the **Challenges**.

The intrapids of **Challenger Mountain** have always held a certain fascination to me. Of all the teams that I remember from my early contact with comics (**Cave Carson**, **Rip Hunter**, **Sea Devil**), the **Challenges** of the **Unknown** were the sole group with superior character portrayal, individually and collectively. And now, through the capable talents of **Skeates**, **Sherman** and **Abel**, they are once again presented in all their glory. I trust that **Conway**, **Nasser** and (?) will continue this tradition when they take the helm in **CHALLENGERS #81**. To be quite honest, I have my doubts. I consider **Mike Nasser** an excellent artist, but I somehow can't see his **GA/SC** style fitting the **Challenges**. It's just a little to (if you'll pardon the expression) "comic-booky". The **Challenges** need an artist that can relate **Lovecraftian**, **Burroughsian** and **Merrittian** concepts back to their beginnings, but as acceptable extensions if a momentarily ungoverned "governed" reality. I cannot honestly say that I would have purchased **SUPER-TEAM FAMILY** #'s 8, 9 and 10 had **Mike Nasser** done the artwork.

As for **Gerry Conway** taking the scripting chores, I can only hope he writes like he did for **Thor** and **Nel** like he did on **JLA**. **Gerry** is better at writing lead character with back-ups like the **Warriors Three** than he is at developing equal billing for team members.

Do not misunderstand me, however. I am not waiting for #81 with a negative attitude. I am merely waiting. Good luck and have a good day.

James Planck
31 Falkirk Ave.
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

We sincerely hope your wait was worthwhile, James (and we also hope you enjoyed your "day off" that cold day last winter). We feel **Mike's** work fits perfectly with **THE CHALLENGERS**, and **Gerry's** been concentrating on giving each **CHALLENGER** his own moment at doing what he does best. We're anxious to hear your feelings on the "Love-craftiness" of the last couple of **CHALLENGER** issues. And never set down on us for being "comic-booky." We're **PROUD** of our products and what they are! We're trying out different themes each issue and a few guest-stars will be popping up in the future—including one of the old favorites you mentioned!—JCH

Dear Editor,

What can I possibly say? Each issue of **SUPER-TEAM FAMILY** starring the **Challenges** has gotten better than the previous one, culminating in the masterpiece presented in **STF #10**.

... The friendly feud between **Red** and **Rocky** is something that was lost for awhile, but I'm really glad to see it back! And talk about characterization! The **Challenges** have really grown past the professional stereo-types they were in the beginning. In addition to an attraction to a certain honorary **Challenger** (which he seems to find hard to express), **Ace** has developed a mean streak of jealousy. Meanwhile, it seems **Prof** has come up with something just slightly more fatal. Hey guys, he just got back! Don't kill him off!

Gaylord Clayburne offers some much-needed inner-conflict. **Prof**, **Red**, **Ace** and **Rocky** all get along so well, and it's only natural after all they've been through together. But you still need that source of antagonism, or it would end up reading like a chapter out of a **Bobbsey Twins** book!

June Robbins? She has never looked better! The jealousy on **Ace's** part is understandable, but knowing **June** is as an independent individual, and the way she's being fought over by **Ace** and **Gaylord**, I should think she's bound to blow up in protest about being volleyed back and forth. It's just a manner of time ...

The simplistic, old-style action and complicated subplots and personal developments have made the **Challenges** return more exciting than even I expected. I look forward to a lo-o-o-ong future for their revived book. Don't let me down.

Mike Christiansen
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Looking back over all the issues of **CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN**, we found it to be one of the earliest comics that delved into the deep characterizations of the members of its "cast." Even though it began with just some friendly rivalry between **ROCKY** and **RED**, we, as readers, could easily determine which character was speaking by just reading the way they said it. They each had their own personality—even "way back then." We know **Gerry** will be able to hold onto this factor in the series while adding some of the wonderment of the "modern comics style!" The best is yet to come!—JCH

Hey! Drop us a card or letter at: **CHALLENGER MOUNTAIN MAIL ROOM**, DC Comics, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10019!